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ETERNAL LIFE: A STUDY OF ITS IMPLICATIONS AND APPLICATIONS. BARON FREDRICH VON HÜGEL. T. & T. Clark. 1912. Pp. lii, 443.

This is a remarkable, most interesting, and very inspiring book. It appears from the preface that the work grew out of a request for an article upon "Eternal Life" for Dr. Hastings's *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*. Becoming too long for the *Encyclopaedia*, arrangement was made for its publication as a separate book. The author is a well-known student in Biblical criticism and philosophy. He was born in Florence in 1852, where his father was then the Austrian Ambassador. His mother was an English lady. A serious illness in childhood left him for many years the victim of ill health. He went to live in England in 1871, and later married an English wife. The fact that he is a member of the Roman Catholic Church makes his book, if possible, all the more interesting.

The subject of the book is not immortality, as a glance at the title might hastily lead one to infer. It is rather the deeper problem and the foundation of all valid religion, of which the hope of immortality may be considered a corollary. Eternal Life is here another name for God. Is there such Life behind all phenomena, infinite, adorable, the ultimate Reality, toward which every movement of human growth and aspiration instinctively reaches up, without which the unfathomable mystery of the world is inexplicable, but in the sublime thought of which man's mind finds satisfaction? If the Eternal Life is seen to be the Reality, if we may justly think of ourselves in relation to that Life as in a true sense its children, then all is well, the mystery of evil will somehow be found to come within the realm of the victorious goodness, and there will never be fear of death for those who have experienced the life of God.

With so great a subject, it is a delight to take as guide a genuine scholar richly equipped in the history of philosophy, distinctly constructive and positive in his treatment, but thoroughly critical and aware of every kind of difficulty, possessed of the best modern scientific openness of mind and a generous hospitality to the contributions of sincere thinkers of every school. In this volume of nearly five hundred pages there is not a paragraph of controversial material, or one which fails to carry at least the sympathetic respect of any reader interested in the discussion of religion.

The author's method of approach is broadly historical. He goes back to the earliest-known thinkers and makes their utterances tell the story of the coming of the consciousness of Eternal Life into the world. He traces the line of this light through a wide variety of experience, wherever genuine and memorable utterances give it

expression. He shows the Christian tradition, so far from being the only revelation of "the life of God in the soul of man," as rather the grand central movement of the stream of spiritual experience. He never antagonizes any thinker who has an aspect of truth to report. Thus, in his treatment of Spinoza, of Schopenhauer, of Nietzsche, of Bergson, he sets forth each one at his best, making clear account of his message and its value, and most interestingly uses the keen edge of his sympathetic criticism to show how the partial view of a one-sided or even inverted philosophy is a testimony to the necessity and reality of an all-round conception of religion. Even the cry of the pessimist is the mark of the hunger of the soul for the Living God. In all this there is no effect of ingenuity or of special pleading. It is rather the grasp of a comprehensive mind, accustomed to act in every direction, without a suspicion that truth can be hurt by the most fearless inquiry. Above all, the reader feels that he is in the company of a man who knows religion from within. Many a writer upon religion discusses the subject *ab extra*, as scientific theorists used to discuss aerial navigation, without ever having seen an air-ship. Here is a writer upon religion who, besides knowing everything that dubious theorizers can say to the contrary, actually knows the Eternal Life, as a man who has travelled in an aeroplane knows the conditions of the control of the air. In this respect Baron von Hügel's treatment of a variety of religious experiences, although only incidental to the main purpose of the book, seems vastly richer and more thorough and reasonable than William James's big book; who overbalances his pages with morbid examples, and always seems, even when most constructive, to be dealing with phenomena outside of his own personal knowledge.

In another interesting chapter on "Institutional Religion" we have a suggestive discussion of the church's seeming loss of ground as an institution. Being a Roman Catholic, the author here treats specially of the problems of his own church, and of the peculiar difficulties that attend it from the collision of its traditional modes of conduct—for instance, toward science, in the use of the Canon Law, in its unyielding claim of the right of persecution—with the strongest currents of modern thought. Frankly critical as he is, a thorough modernist in his knowledge of the conditions of our present world, he finds the cult and worship, especially the habit of adoration, the symbolism, the rich tradition of the Catholic Church, too precious and practically too useful to change his conviction of the essential divineness of the ancient organization. Moreover, he contrives to maintain a good hope that, as it has slowly learned some things in

the past—for example, to accept the Copernican astronomy—it will likewise develop so as to become worthy of the confidence of the world. This will be, not so much because of outward changes, as because of the absolute necessity in the life of man for the consciousness of the Infinite Life, and because the church will minister more and more effectively to this profound need. It is rather hard to believe that if Baron von Hügel had not been born into the Roman Communion, he would ever have been able to join it. For he seems to belong to the noble list of the free spirits who, taking their religion “at first hand,” can hardly bear the yoke of external authority.

One would like to quote many an eloquent and stirring passage from this unusual book. It is full of great utterances of religion, carrying their own weight and evidence. It is also rich in philosophical criticism, dominated by a faith and a philosophy so high that smaller and partial philosophies fall into their place as so many approximate efforts after that which indeed must transcend every endeavor of the mind of man.

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JAMAICA PLAIN.

RELIGION AND LIFE. ELWOOD WORCESTER, Ph.D. Harper & Brothers. 1914. Pp. 264. \$1.25.

Dr. Worcester divides into three parts his study of religion—its relation to the community, to Jesus, and to the individual soul. Of these the second will perhaps be found most valuable, for it shows much insight into the history and character of Jesus. Views of critical scholars, which with them are apt to stop at intellectual conclusions, Dr. Worcester develops upon their religious side, exhibiting in them food for meditation and growth. Thus the view, which Schweitzer has emphasized, that Jesus regarded the end of the world as near at hand, is shown by Dr. Worcester as moulding Jesus' plans and shaping his action.⁵ We may indeed question the author's interpretation of the crime of Judas. This he considers to have been not the indication to the authorities of the place where Jesus was to be found; not the pointing out to them of the individual; but the betrayal to them of Jesus' claim to be the Messiah, which—so he holds—had up to that time been carefully kept secret.

But whether we agree with the author in this or not, we welcome the clearness with which he connects the remarkable events in Jesus' career with the laws which govern all life. The majority of

⁵ P. 121 ff.